

## Working smoke alarm best defense against fire

DEAR ABBY: Approximately every three hours, a home fire death occurs somewhere in the U.S. These fatalities occur because there wasn't a functioning smoke detector in the house.

According to the
National Fire Protection
Association, 96 percent of
American homes have at
least one smoke alarm.
However, an estimated 19
percent of them do not
work, primarily because of
missing or dead batteries.

Please join me this year in urging your readers when they set their clocks back to standard time this Sunday to use the extra hour they gain to change and test the batteries in their smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors. It only takes a moment, and they offer the best defense a family has against the devastating effects of a home fire.

No one should be hurt or potentially lose a life for want of a working smoke alarm, yet death strikes nearly 3,000 people every year in home fires. A working smoke alarm will provide individuals and families precious extra seconds to get out safely.

Thank you for printing this, Abby. Together, we can make a difference and, hopefully, save a life. — JACK PAROW, PRESIDENT, INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FIRE CHIEFS

DEAR MR. PAROW: I hope my readers will take to heart your suggestion. This is a ritual I perform when I set my clocks back every year. And readers, please be aware that smoke alarms should be replaced every 10



Dear Abby

years and there should be a mix of both ionization and photoelectric smoke alarms in your home so that you and your loved ones

will be alerted to all types of home fires. This was news to me, and I hope you will mention it to your friends and loved ones!

DEAR ABBY: I have been unhappy for more than a year. People tell me my teens should be a happy time in my life, but they aren't. I have a pretty good life with no major problems. But because it's not perfect, I tend to take little things and agonize over them. My emotions are affecting my relationships with other people, my self-esteem and, most of all, my mind.

Abby, I'm only 15; I have no power. How can I get my parents to understand that I need a therapist and they should help me get some help? — ALWAYS SAD IN ST. PETERS-

BURG, FLA.

**DEAR ALWAYS SAD:** You appear to be a bright young lady who is very much in touch with your emotions. When someone is consistently depressed for more than a few weeks, it's a sign that professional help may be needed. There may be many reasons for your mother's reluctance to accept this - from concern about the cost to fear that seeing a therapist might cause you to be labeled as having emotional problems.





